

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Metro North Hospital and Health Service *Putting people first*



Message from the Executive Director

HUMAN RESOURCES

Sarah Bench

Dear Colleagues

Our response to the ongoing spread of COVID-19 continues to evolve, as we continue to manage the increasing growth in demand for our health services.

To support social distancing and ensure business continuity, we are asking managers to consider whether their team could operate remotely. We recognise that for the majority of employees providing clinical care, clinical support services or roles that require a physical presence, working from home is not an option. Many of our employees will need to remain working onsite to provide direct or indirect patient care.

Your work during this extraordinary time is critically important to our community, and we are grateful for your tireless effort and commitment to supporting our vulnerable communities of Queensland.

For those teams where flexible work arrangements might be suitable, here's how it will work:

- All flexible work arrangements will be made locally at each Directorate and based on consultation and approval by local management.
- Managers are asked to consider splitting their teams, rotating half onsite and half working from home. This will support social distancing and our ability to maintain critical services.
- Appropriate work health and safety measures and digital requirements need to be implemented – please read the [flexible working arrangements guidance](#), complete the [Telecommuting Safety Checklist](#) with your manager and read the **Working From Home in Metro North – Tips for Success** guide on our COVID-19 HR page. This arrangement is within each manager's discretion and we recognise that this may take some time to put in place.
- Managers will need to continually assess staffing arrangements to ensure optimum efficiency for service delivery and ensure flexible work arrangements continue to be implemented in a thoughtful and controlled way.
- Prioritising our work will be critical as we implement these arrangements.
- Arrangements will need to be flexible and fluid, and it will be at the discretion of a manager if their employee is required on site.
- Lastly, in line with the current guidance, where possible please ensure a distance of 1.5 metres is kept between yourself and others.

As we implement these changes in our work plan, we recognise that this approach is not static. We will continue to adjust our response as our Chief Health Officer and government authorities release new information. Staffing needs will likely vary over

time depending on growth in demand for our services, job responsibilities and our ability to effectively do our work remotely.

Again, this is only for team members who have roles that lend themselves to working from home. As we all continue to manage through this period, please make the time to take care of yourself and your families.

If you need help with something, speak to your manager and continue to visit our [COVID-19 page](#) for up to date information and wellbeing resources. Our HR Hotline has been established and you can reach the team on 3647 2819 or MetroNorthHR@health.qld.gov.au.

Our employee assistance provider [Benestar](#) is another important resource that's here to help support you with any concerns or anxiety you have around the current COVID-19 situation and your changing working arrangements.

We are proud of your response to the dynamic situation during COVID-19. Your commitment to delivering best-in-class healthcare to our patients and consumers in a rapidly changing environment is inspiring, and we thank you again for your exemplary work.

Best
Sarah